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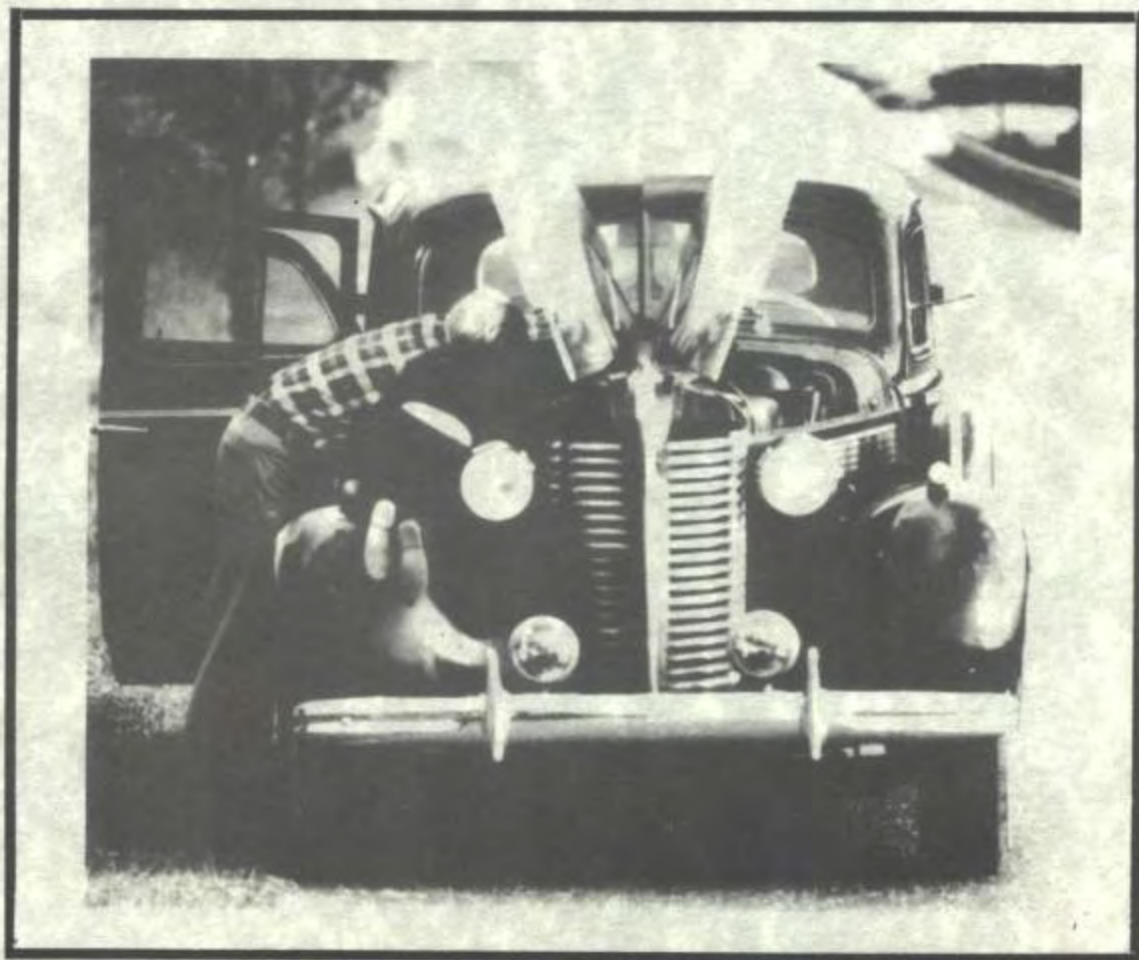
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THE TORQUE•TUBE

THE NEWS PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS

OF THE 1937-1938 BUICK CLUB • FOUNDED 1980



Volume VI • Number 2



THE TORQUE·TUBE

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VOL.VI• OCTOBER 1987 •NO.2

● **William E. Olson, Editor** ●
● **842 Mission Hills Lane, Worthington, Ohio 43085** ●

Summer and Winter

Winter is on its way, at least in the Northern Hemisphere. "Down under" in Australia and South Africa, our members eagerly await the arrival of their version of May, and those below the Thirty-Fifth Parallel in the USA, the advent of slightly cooler temperatures and the onslaught of winter vacationers. Here in the Rust Belt, however, combines are rolling through the brown corn stalks, and the good ol' boys are checking their slug guns, for Deer Season is almost here. Summer in Ohio was both Dry and Miserably Hot, and I have the feeling that Winter will be both Wet and Miserably Cold. (Do I like the weather here? Is the sky green? Is the Dalai Lama Jewish? It could be worse. Steamboat Springs, Colorado saw snow weeks ago, and in Gunnison, Colorado the thermometer has already seen 10 F.)

Sometimes hath the brightest day a cloud;
And after summer evermore succeeds
Barren winter, with his wrathful nipping cold;
So cares and joys abound, as seasons fleet.

(King Henry VI, Part II - Act II, sc. 4.)

It is thus by no means too early to think about next summer's events. Many of

FRONT COVER: Paul Culp copes with adversity -- a broken distributor advance -- as his son studies the proceedings.

BACK COVER: Bob Pipkin's '38 Century sport sedan at historic Timberline Lodge on Oregon's Mt. Hood. Read their stories in this issue.



FOUNDED BY DAVE LEWIS



you know that the 1988 Buick Club of America National Meet will be held in Flint, Michigan — "Buicktown, USA" — July 7 - 10. An unprecedented variety of interesting and enjoyable events is planned. I heard from our member in The Netherlands, Hans Kirpestein (#624), that he is planning a trip to the USA to attend. If Hans can come from Europe, most of you can come from wherever you are. The BCA Central Ohio Chapter, of which I am a member, has already booked its complement of hotel rooms. Get busy and do the same.

In addition, the Central Ohio Chapter will be hosting 1988's BCA Great Lakes Region Meet, to be held August 4-7 at Stouffers Inn, just off I-270 in Dublin, Ohio, a few miles north of Columbus. We have some great tours and other events planned for this, including a visit to Len Immke's car collection. Mr. Immke specializes in Buicks and Cadillacs. The collection is not open to the public, and I guarantee it will knock off your socks. Your Editor, by the way, is chairman of this Meet. Am I a glutton for punishment, or just dumb? Neither. While I am not known for being devout, I believe in the Biblical injunction about casting bread upon the waters, and every loaf thus far cast has been returned. (Sowing and reaping, too.) Besides, somebody had to do it. To paraphrase a famous dairy products slogan, "If it's Olson's, it's got to be good." It will be. More details on this later.

Last and I hope not least, one of us is doing preliminary work on another Club Meet in the Midwest. Don't get real excited about this yet, 'cause I don't know if we'll get anything together. More about this may follow. Probably 20% of our members live in California, which has been called the Land of Fruits and Nuts, but is indubitably the Land of Cars. And, there are several members in each adjoining state. How about you guys putting together a Club Meet on the West Coast? Don't sit back and wait for Somebody Else to do it. Like Tomorrow, Somebody Else never appears.

"The world would sleep if things were run
By men who say, 'It can't be done!'"

(Philander Johnson (1866-1939): It Can't Be Done)

What other car magazine quotes Shakespeare; Milton; The Bible; Obscure Poets? None, and probably a good thing it is, too.

ADMINISTRATIVE DRONING

I am, you will recall, permitted a little of this by the Editor's Conscience. This time it involves your Club Number and your Membership Expiration Date. When Dave Lewis started the Club, he gave each member a number — I suppose because most clubs have numbers. I have continued this. The numbers don't mean much, but they do give a rough idea of when a person joined and how long he has been with us. The Club originally started with some 200 members, so anyone with a number between 1 and 200 has been in since 1980 or 1981. We are now up to 666. This does not mean there are now that many members, because over half have dropped out along the way, and I don't use "old" numbers over again. Notwithstanding the numbers being in the Roster (which most of you have), many people forget them. Many people also forget when their memberships expire. We hope soon to be able to put this information on the mailing labels. The labels are prepared — on an unpaid, volunteer basis — by Steve Weinstein (#532). Steve's present computer program cannot handle more than names and addresses: it won't do the numbers and dates without going blooey. I know because we tried it. Steve is working at an upgrade of his equipment, and we hope to be able to add numbers and expiration dates to the labels in the future. That will at least give you a continuing reminder of this. THIS IS HOPE, NOT PROMISE!

RED ROADMASTER POSTSCRIPT

The Red Roadmaster of Oregon has been a busy car. In addition to its other activities (see this issue and the last one), Marshall Nelson's 1937 80C participated in a parade in Salem several weeks ago honoring a local high school boy who received national honors. His high school colors were black and dark red. The marching band and pom-pom girls wore black and red, and Salem Mayor Sue Miller wore a red dress and rode in the back seat — with the top down, of course. Doug Nelson says: "I had the pleasure of driving the car and it was great fun." Timberline Lodge, described in Doug's touring story in this issue, was re-dedicated this year on its fiftieth anniversary. This event featured an actor playing Franklin D. Roosevelt and — naturally — the Red Roadmaster. Below is a photo of Marshall Nelson, "FDR," and Big Red. Unfortunately, Doug was not able to get a photo of "FDR" riding in the back seat with the top down; would have been terrific. (This proves, by the way, that the tops of four-door convertibles can be put down and then up again.)



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VOLUME VI PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

All members are reminded that there are nine — **NINE** — issues of THE TORQUE TUBE per Volume, and each Volume runs from September 1 to August 31 of the following year. Please do not ask why it's not on a calendar year basis: it got the way it is, and it's staying. There are nine issues because that is the Editor's ABSOLUTE MAXIMUM LIMIT. Here is a tentative schedule of publication for Volume VI. "Tentative" means exactly that. Please note that the identification by months doesn't mean much.

Issue No. 1	"September"	Already mailed.
No. 2	"October"	This is it.
No. 3	"December"	December 20, 1987
No. 4	"January"	January 20, 1988
No. 5	"March"	March 1
No. 6	"April"	April 10
No. 7	"May"	May 15
No. 8	"June"	June 20
No. 9	"July"	July 25

Traditionally, I have omitted November, February and August, and I am adhering to that pattern in labeling the issues, even though "September" and "October" were a month or so late.

Decals are back in stock.



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THREE CHEERS FOR -- DIVERSITY!

The one thing, above all others, that I have found at once most interesting and rewarding about the antique car "hobby" -- I suppose it's a hobby, I'm not making money at it -- is not the cars, but the people. I have met people, and made friends, from many backgrounds, income levels, and walks of life. Few, if any, of these people would I have encountered otherwise, and I, for one, feel my life is much the richer for it. Almost to a man -- and woman -- antique car people are just plain nice folks. Moreover, contrary to what some casual observers might suppose, the hobby is not a rich man's diversion. Sure, if one looks among the Duesenbergs, Isottas and Packard Twelves, the owners will be pretty well-heeled. But that's really a small minority. Overall, I have always thought, antique car buffs are a microcosm of society, and in a club such as ours the lion may truly lie down with the lamb.

With all this in mind, I decided to poke an Editorial Nose into Other People's Business. That is, I included in this year's Application and Roster Form lines where each member could, if he chose, indicate his occupation or business and his special interests or expertise. Although as of this writing (around mid-October), not all the forms have come in and some elected not to divulge this information, I have 177 responses to the "Occupation or Business" inquiry, which is a pretty decent representative sample.

As I suspected, while the avocation is common to us all, the vocations are remarkably diverse. Would you have thought that we have among us, to cite just a few examples, a geophysicist, a state police officer, a landscape architect? One might expect some engineers, physicians, dentists; but in truth, professions typically associated with the higher income levels do not rise above a small minority. And how about butcher, stair builder, florist, or -- I really like these -- dealer in antique juke boxes, or criminal investigator for the Treasury Department? They're all here, folks, large as life, bound with all of us by a common interest in Great Cars.

The results of this little poll are tabulated below.

Accounting; Auditing	4
Art; Design; Photography	4
Automobile Dealers	3
Auto, Truck Parts; Tires	7
Auto, Truck Repair	7
Banking; Finance	2
Civil Service	6
Clergy	1
Consultants (Various)	5
Contractors	13
Concrete - 2	
Gen. Building - 6	
Plumbing; HVAC - 3	
Other - 2	



Crafts (Mechanics;	13
Machiniests; Carpenters; etc.)	
Data Processing	2
Dentistry	3
Dental Laboratory	1
Education	9
Engineering	8
Farming	3
Geophysics	1
Investments	2
Landscape Architecture	1
Law Enforcement	3
Lawyers	5
Management; Supervision	12
(Various)	
Manufacturing (Various)	4
Medicine	4
Pharmacy	1
Pilots (Aircraft)	2
Printing	2
Real Estate	9
Retail Businesses (Various)	7
Sales	9
Trucking; Limousines	2
RETIRED	26

Obviously, all this was not easy to classify accurately, and some of the assignments to a category were more-or-less arbitrary. In general, I tried to separate managers who worked for a company from owners or principals of a business. Thus under "Manufacturing" I put people who own a business that makes something as distinguished from "Management" people who may work for a manufacturing company, even though the former are probably managers. Similarly, an engineer may be a supervisor, or own his own firm, but those who said "engineer" are listed as such. Likewise, an auto mechanic would be listed under "Crafts" and the owner of an auto repair business under "Auto & Truck Repair." You get the idea. In any event, the exercise was intended only to give a general, broad idea of the diversity of callings or vocations, among us, and I think it does that. The largest single category is of course "Retired," but that doesn't indicate this is an "old man's hobby" since most were in it long before they retired, and the proportion -- 26 of 177, or 15% -- probably corresponds closely with that of the population at large.

I also asked about "Particular Interests or Expertise." I admit this was a bit ambiguous; I meant antique-car-related, but am now glad I did not say so precisely. I got a range of answers that defies classification, but which was entertaining and at least somewhat informative. As we knew, several of us are also interested in steam locomotives, and one in steam cars (he's restoring a Stanley). We also have complements of golfers and fishermen -- not surprising. Beyond that -- well, you name it. One member, known to some for a certain ribald waggishness, wrote "T&A." This may mean "Technology and its Applications," or "Temples and Archaeological Sites," or "Texas and Arizona," or it may mean something else.

Touring to Timberline



TIMBERLINE LODGE TOUR **Story and Photos by Doug Nelson - Salem, Oregon**

The idea came to us during the summer of 1986. Bob Pipkin and I were talking Buicks, and in particular 1937-38 Buicks. Why not have an Oregon tour to the Columbia River area and stay overnight at Timberline Lodge? 1987 would be 50 years since the 1937 dedication of Timberline Lodge — one of the nation's outstanding structures. The Lodge is located on Mt. Hood, Oregon's most famous mountain.

Timberline Lodge was built during 1936 and 1937 by northwest craftsmen as a WPA project (Works Progress Administration). Located at the 6000-foot level on Mt. Hood, the Lodge is built with native stone, wrought iron and heavy hand-hewn beams of Douglas Fir. A giant central fireplace and chimney, built with 400 tons of stone, is 92 feet tall and dominates the three levels of the Lodge. On the top of this chimney stands a brass weathervane which weighs 750 pounds. On September 28, 1937, President Franklin Roosevelt dedicated this beautiful building, calling it "a monument to the skill and faithful performance of the workers" who had built it. Timberline Lodge has become known around the world, and has been visited by over 30 million people in its 50-year existence.

The main instigators of this adventure were Bob Pipkin and the brothers Nelson. Between us we had three roadworthy Buicks of the 1937-38 vintage. Our goal was to see some of the many points of interest in the Columbia River Gorge and Mt. Hood area during a long weekend in the summer of 1987, and to invite other 1937-38 Buick Club members along for the fun. Eventually eight couples in seven Buicks made the trip and all had a great time.

Marshall Nelson's '37 Roadmaster at Crown Point, Oregon. The stone structure was built in 1915 to commemorate completion of the Scenic Highway through the Columbia River Gorge.



We left Salem on Friday afternoon, July 31 from Bob Pipkin's house and traveled up through Portland to Troutdale, Oregon, where we took the historic scenic river route up to Crown Point. A real bonus was in store for us there. The Pierce-Arrow Society of America was holding its national tour in the Portland area, and we intercepted that tour at Crown Point. It was an old car nut's dream! Buicks of the 30's meeting Pierce-Arrows of the teens, 20's and 30's on beautiful back country roads. At Crown Point everybody took pictures of the cars, each other and the Columbia River Gorge. What an afternoon! I fell in love with a gorgeous yellow and gold 1935 Pierce-Arrow coupe. We could have spent much more time, but alas, the stern wagon master Bob Pipkin made us leave so we could arrive at Hood River, Oregon to claim our motel rooms for the evening. We stopped briefly at Multnomah Falls, the second highest waterfall in the U.S. (620 feet), and the U.S. Government's Bonneville Dam, a giant hydroelectric facility.

The following morning we all gathered at the historic Columbia Gorge Hotel for their famous two-hour breakfast. Nine courses in two hours of all you could possibly eat. The Hotel management was so impressed with Marshall Nelson's 1937 Roadmaster Phaeton that they asked him to park it out front in a special V.I.P. parking spot. While we were having breakfast, another old car bonus, the Portland, Oregon Chapter of the Horseless Carriage Club of America came touring through the beautiful hotel grounds. Most of them probably thought Marshall's car belonged there, as it looked so elegant.

After this fantastic meal, we motored over the Lewis & Clark Highway to our next stop, Maryhill Museum of Art in the State of Washington. The museum, now housing many beautiful art collections, was originally built as a house for one Sam Hill (1857 - 1931) a wealthy and talented businessman. He loved cars and the lower level of the house had two circular rotundas, even capable of parking 24 automobiles. On the entry level these rotundas served as circular driveways to deliver guests to a large reception hall. You really have to see this place to believe it. Again mean old Bob Pipkin made us leave because we had yet to drive up the mountain to Timberline.



Doug Nelson's '38 model 665 and Bob Pipkin's '38 model 67 look over the Columbia River from the Maryhill Museum.

We attempted to find some open antique shops in The Dalles, Oregon for the ladies but only succeeded in losing two of our party briefly before rejoining them on the highway up to Mt. Hood. We all had a good lesson in keeping seven cars together. Other stops along our route were Celilo, a traditional Indian fishing ground in the days when the Columbia was undammed and turbulent, and Rowena Crest, a high bluff overlooking the River with spectacular views.

During the entire trip, no one had any mechanical trouble aside from a few embarrassing radiator boil-overs because of the hot weather. All of us were pleased with the roadworthiness of the Buick Automobile.

By late afternoon Saturday we reached the parking lot at Timberline at the 6,000-foot level. What a climb, but taken in stride by the Buicks. More pictures, tire kicking, and another great meal in the historic Timberline Lodge that evening. Sunday morning we drove down the mountain to Portland and stopped at the historic Pittock Mansion where we met Club member Jerry Beal (#606) and his beautiful 1938 Century Phaeton.

1937-38 Club members making the tour were the Dug Waggoners (#010), the Bob Berdons (#368), Marshall Nelson (#370), the Bob Pipkins (#076) and the Dug Nelsons (#051). Other Buick friends drove a beautiful 1941 super coupe and a 1951 super woody wagon. Truly, an unforgettable adventure.

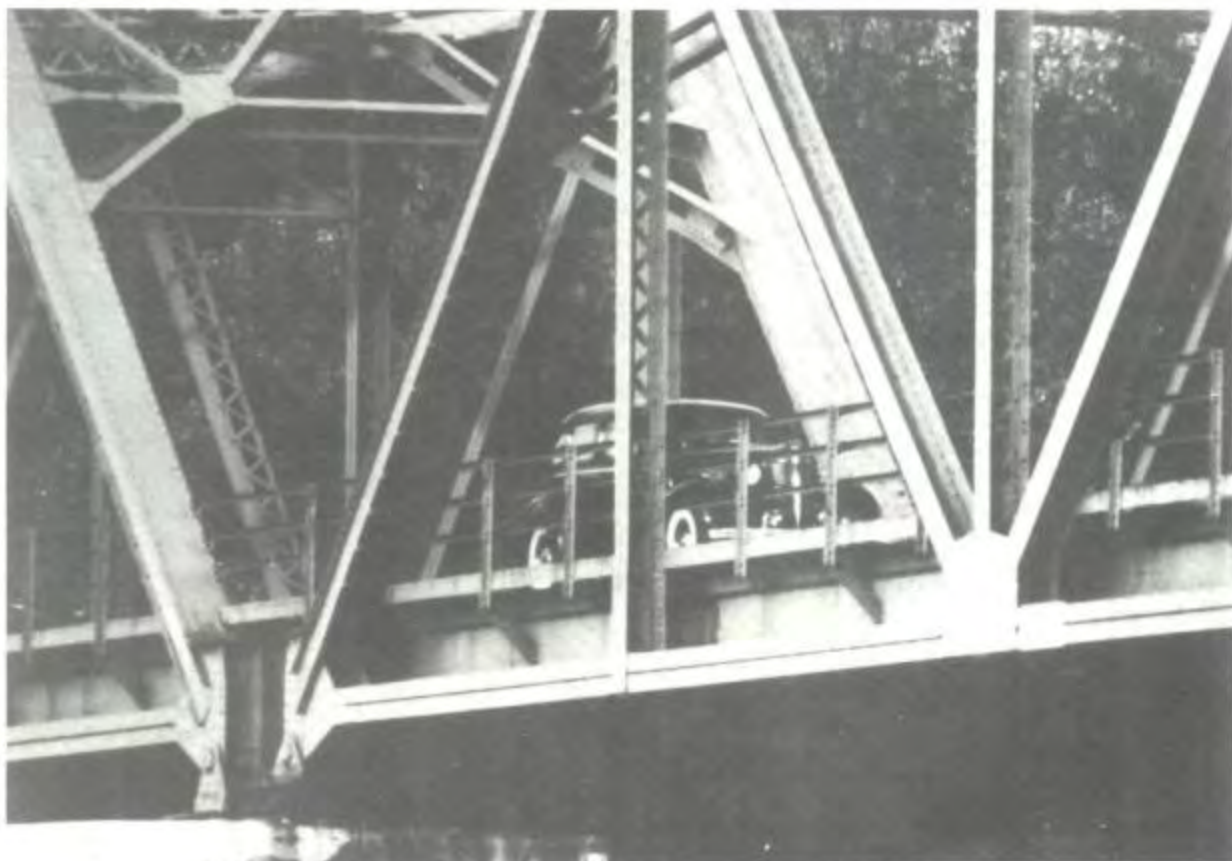


Three Centuries at the Pittock Mansion: Bob Pipkin's sport sedan, Jerry Beal's phaeton, and Doug Nelson's sport coupe.

Our thanks to Doug Nelson for sharing with us this great adventure. After reading it, I was sorry I hadn't made the trip all the way to Oregon to participate. There are some terrific sights to be seen in the Pacific Northwest, and, contrary to what you may have heard, it doesn't rain every day. (In fact -- I regret to say -- Columbus, Ohio has a higher annual percentage of cloudy days than Seattle.) Mt. Hood, at 11,245 feet, is Oregon's highest peak and can be seen from a great distance -- our answer to Fujiyama. The Columbia River rises in British Columbia, flows south through Washington and then turns west to form most of the Oregon-Washington border, emptying into the Pacific after 1,200 miles. Before the Gummint put all those dams across it, the river was a lot wilder than today, but the salmon still run upstream, thanks to fish ladders in the dams, and people and bears still chase 'em.

In the photos we see again the Red Roadmaster featured in last issue's Romantic Fable. This time, of course, the story is true, but the Roadmaster is Fabulous in any event. The other cars ain't bad, either!

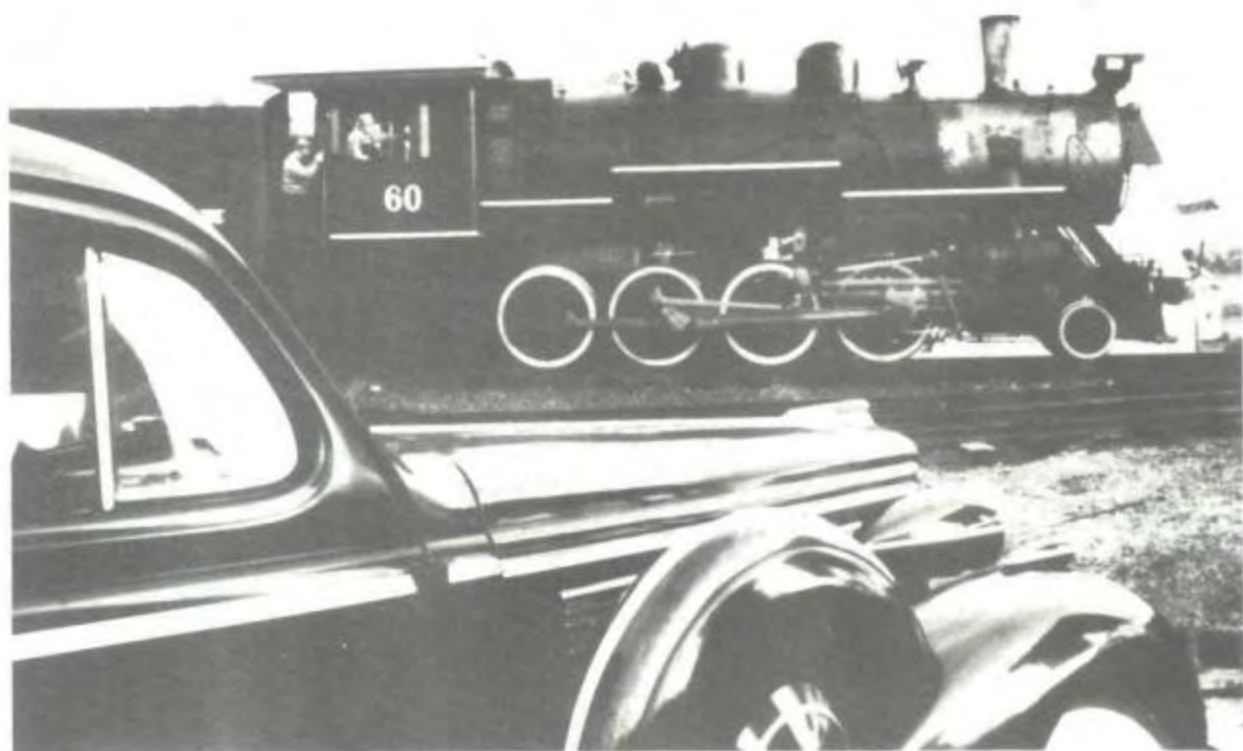
COPING WITH ADVERSITY



STORY & PHOTOS BY PAUL B. CULP, JR.

It was beautiful autumn weather in October 1986 and we looked forward to a Sunday drive to Princeton, New Jersey. Our route was via the Point Pleasant-Stockton Bridge across the Delaware River. After crossing the Delaware we drove directly to Princeton. By mid-afternoon we decided to return by way of the Black River and Western Railroad to see the steam locomotives and perhaps arrange a few "period" photographs. Upon our arrival in Ringos, New Jersey we were met by B.R.&W. #60 as she crossed the short girder bridge into the station and by a dozen or so admirers of old machinery. (This is certainly the place to see it especially since it is only 65 miles west of New York City.)

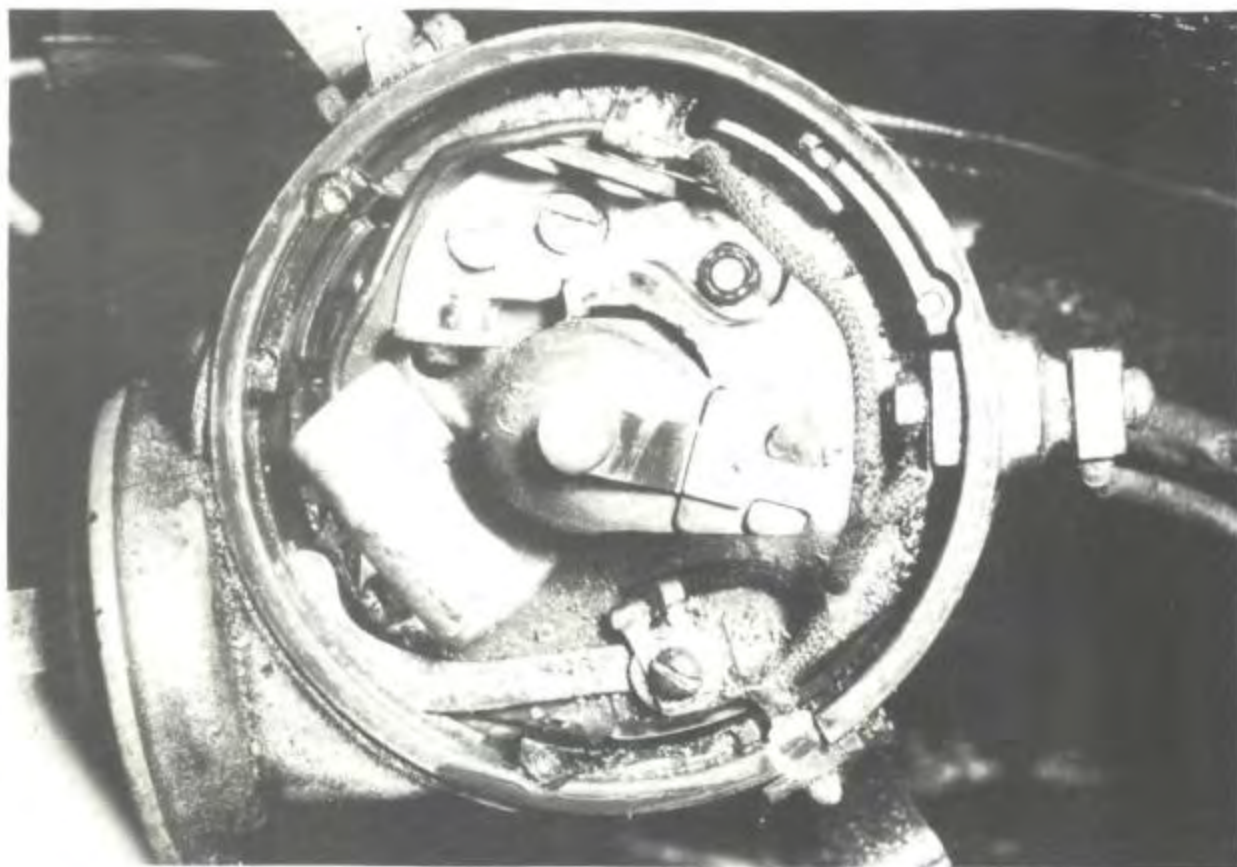
I like watching the locomotive being serviced so we drove the Buick into the yards. I have enjoyed watching this "Consolidation" type locomotive many times. The first time, it was on the end of the "Broadway Limited" in September 1963. The Great Western Railway (a sugar beet operation) of Colorado had sold #60 to the B.R.&W. I just happened upon her "dead-head" move from Colorado to New Jersey.



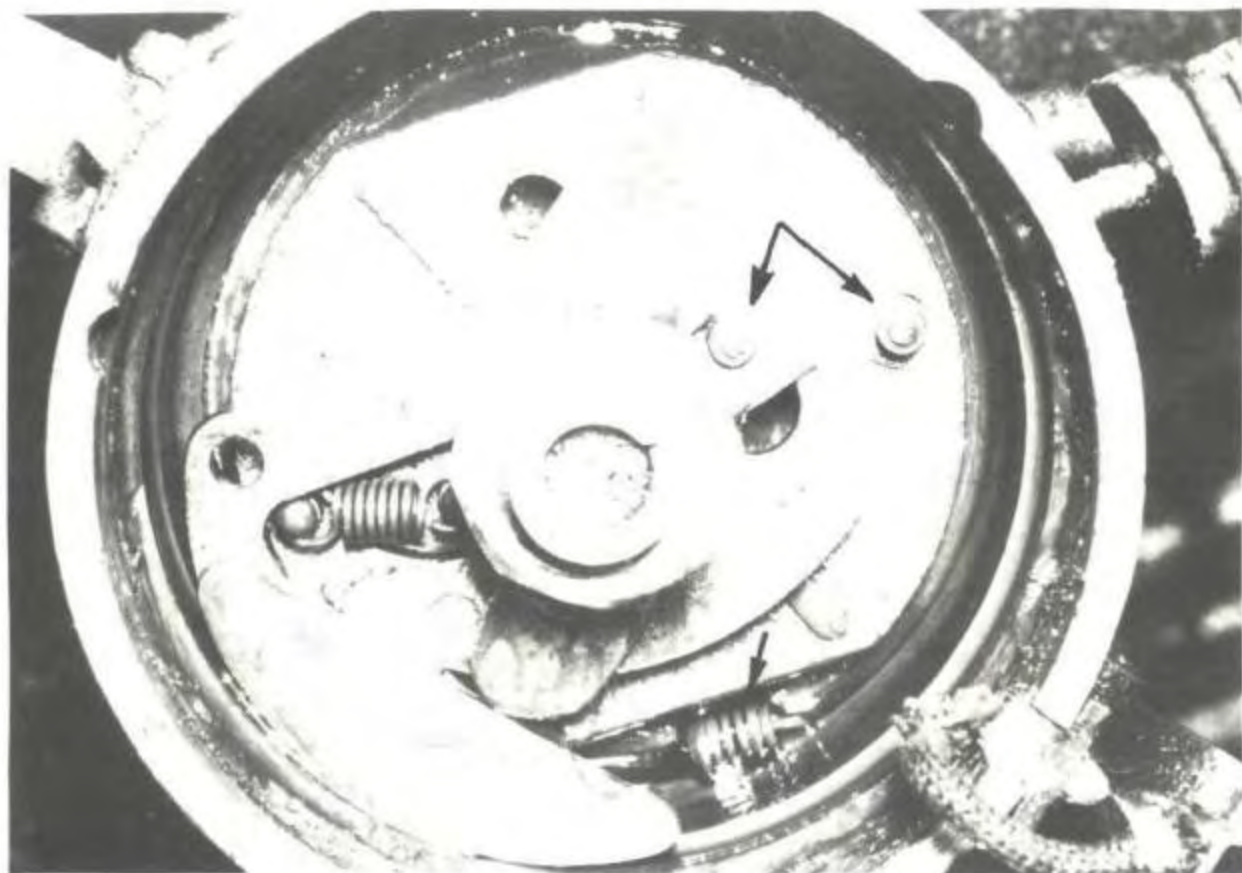
So there I was in my 1938 Buick Century parked beside a 1937 product of the American Locomotive Company. After seeing the movie "Back to the Future" I found myself in a 50-year time warp. We watched the steamer switching in the yards while that big Buick looked on with stately approval. The elements were in harmony.

As the sun was lowering in the sky with only about three hours of daylight left, we planned to view #60 cross the first grade crossing north of the station on her return trip to Flemington, N.J.

We started off for home in Bucks County, Pennsylvania and within a mile of the grade crossing the '38 quit. A few preliminary checks confirmed it was the ignition. (90% of all automotive problems are electrical, to quote an old trouble shooting guide). No spark from the coil while cranking, so "off with the distributor cap." The problem was evident by the floppy breaker plate as the engine cranked. The vacuum advance arm was askew and jammed out of position. The points were not opening. One of the plastic breaker plate bearings and centering supports was broken (there are three at 120° positions). I also fetched out part of an advance spring. Evidently the mechanical advance spring under the breaker plate broke, jamming the cam rotation, forcing the breaker plate out of position and misaligning the points thus collapsing the circuit.



Notice broken plastic bearing support.



Broken pins and spring.

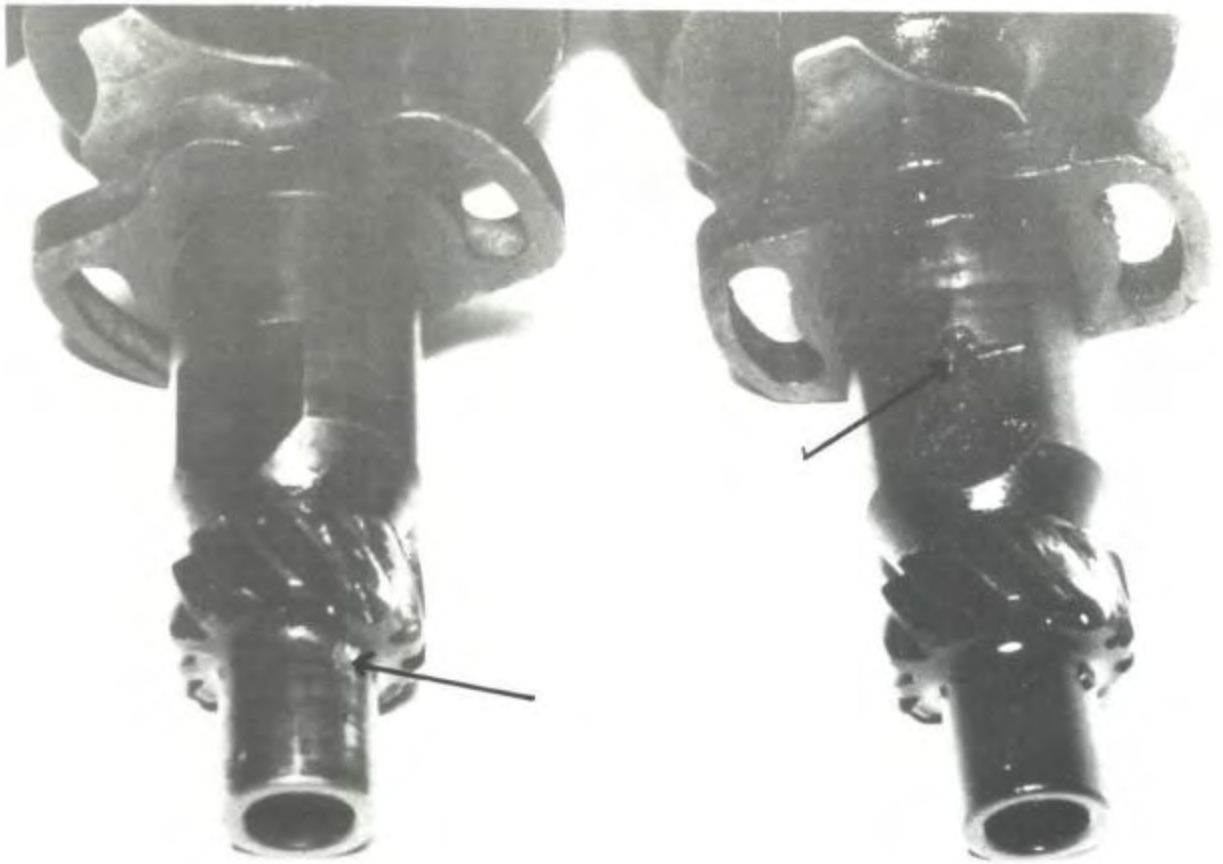
On the road in these circumstances, you compromise. So, I removed the vacuum advance line and plugged it, lifted the breaker plate, and removed the springs and centrifugal weights. I then repositioned the plate and three plastic centering bearings, checked point gap, installed rotor and cap and we were off on our way home.

Outside of minor back-firing, she pulled strongly even out of the Delaware River Valley and up to the rolling hills of Bucks County. At home that night I knew it was R&R (remove and replace) time for the distributor.

I began this project by first locating another distributor. An incomplete unit for \$15.00 was had with its mechanical advance unit complete. After positioning the crankshaft and rotor (following the shop manuals) removal and inspection revealed broken pins on the advance plate. These could be repaired by making new pins, but I chose the easier solution: use another one. Fabrication of these parts could be done another time (another one of those winter projects!).

I cleaned and disassembled the replacement distributor after lubricating all the moving parts. They were installed in reverse order. The springs can be acquired at a NAPA store. These sets are in the \$5.00 range (the length is about 3/4" or .750).

When installing, be sure that the breaker plate is free to move in its three-point suspension. Those three molded plastic pieces fit in specific locations. (If your distributor has balls then be sure that the retainers are holding the balls in proper alignment.) Now I set the point gap from .012 to .018. (The dwell angle is 30°.)



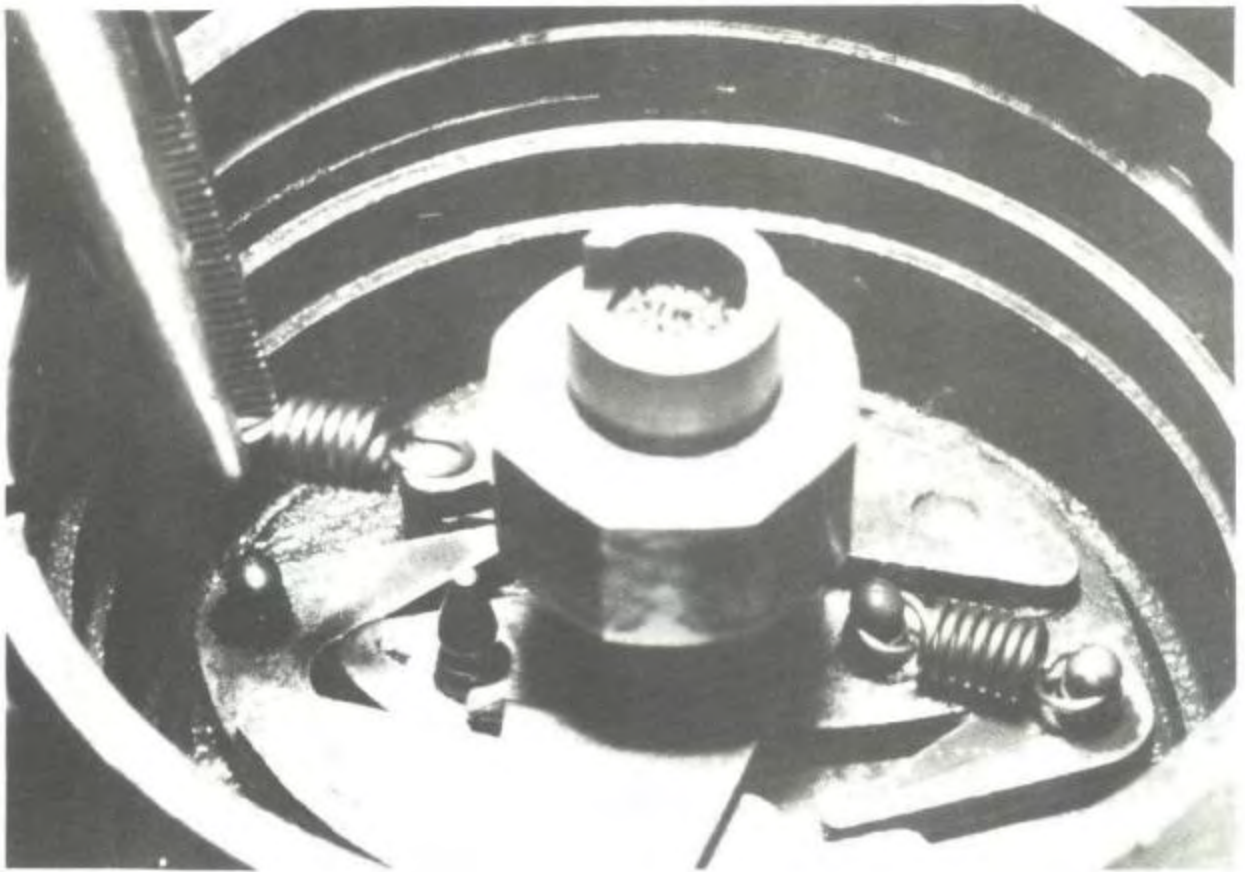
Drive gear in place on two units. The oil passage holes should be cleaned out with lacquer thinner and compressed air.



Distributor advance weights, springs and cam.



Close-up of spring.

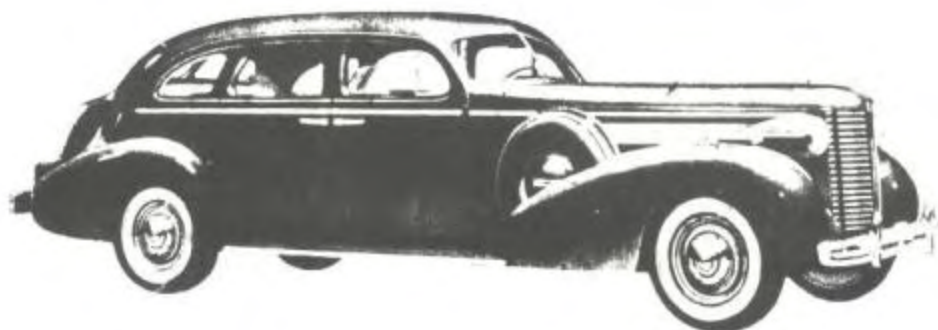


Installing new spring.

A limited amount of cam lubricant was applied which should add to the life of the breaker block. Before positioning, be sure your cork gasket is in good order. I made a new one out of cork roll. This will keep the side of your engine clean of oil leaks. (Yes there is a hole from the main oil gallery to the distributor - perhaps the new gasket will improve oil pressure slightly.) After locating the rotor in relation to the camshaft and crank (notice the advance and retard positions), I secured the distributor with its two bolts and adjusted the timing with a strobe to six degrees advance. After all this, the cover for the flywheel inspection hole was put back in place. One more project crossed off the list.

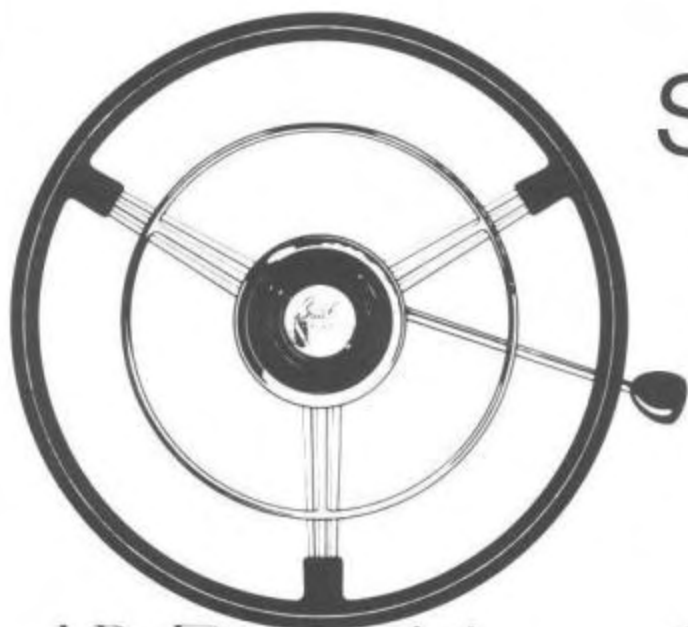


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TECHNICAL TIPS



A DISTRIBUTOR PRIMER

by The Editor

Paul Culp's story is not intended to be a definitive treatise on distributors. One very useful thing it does tell us is this: if you have trouble on the road with either the mechanical or vacuum advance mechanisms, they can be deactivated and the engine will still run well enough with no spark advance to get you home, or to the nearest source of help. The two advance systems work in tandem. Plugging or failure of the vacuum advance is not likely to break anything inside the distributor. However, when, as here, the mechanical advance system fails, the vacuum advance, when it tries to function, is likely to screw things up and must be shut down also.

I cannot write a definitive treatise on distributors or ignition systems either. However, I can give you a little elementary material on how they work. This, plus the diagram and part numbers taken from the Master Parts Book, and material from other sources, may help some of you to better understand Paul's story and photos.

We are of course dealing with a breaker-point system and thus — fortunately for me — can forget about electronics. In either type ignition system, however, we are dealing with two circuits: primary and secondary. The sole purpose of these is to cause high-voltage current to jump the gap between the electrodes of each spark plug with a miniature arc, to ignite the air-fuel mixture in each cylinder at precisely the right time.

The primary circuit conducts low voltage from the battery and consist of:

- ignition switch
- resistance wire
- ignition coil primary winding
- breaker points
- condenser

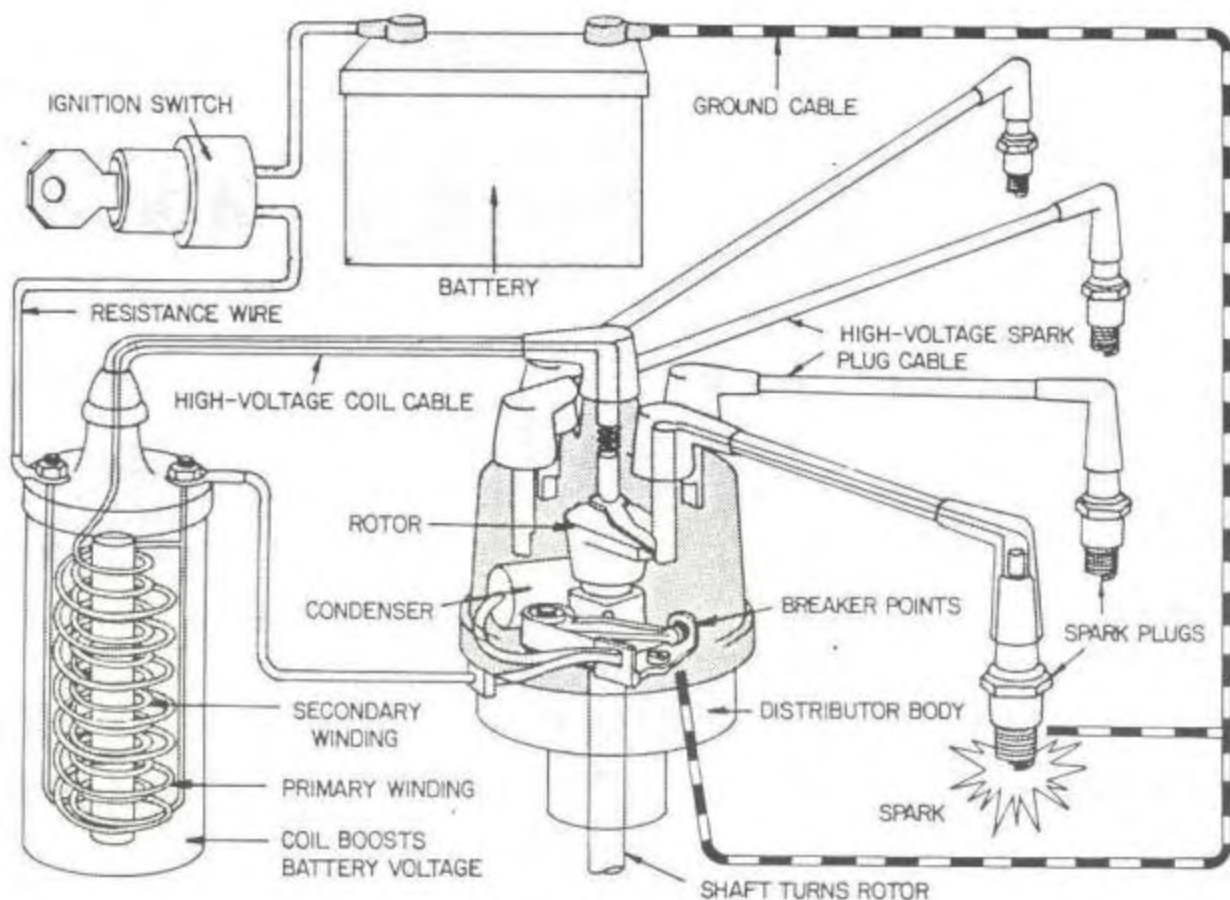
The secondary circuit consists of:

- secondary windings in the coil
- distributor cap
- rotor
- high-voltage (spark plug) cables
- spark plugs

The wiring in the secondary circuit is heavily insulated because it must conduct high-voltage ("high tension") electricity. If we recall our high school general science class, we know that voltage is akin to pressure and amperage to quantity.

We can fill a water-gun, give a slow, gentle pull on the trigger and get only a dribble, no matter how much water the gun holds: not enough pressure. Likewise, no matter how big our battery and cables, six volts is not enough electrical "pressure" (voltage) to jump that gap in the spark plug: we need thousands of volts.

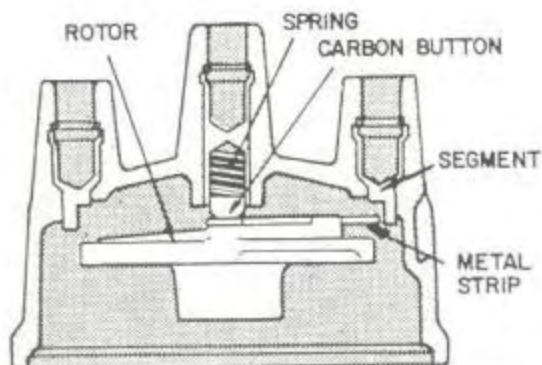
The function of the distributor is to distribute high-voltage current to each spark plug at the right instant. It does so, of course, by spinning a rotor past the cable terminals in the distributor cap, the rotor being mounted on a shaft driven by a gear meshing with a gear on the camshaft. When we turn the ignition switch on, current flows from the battery through the primary winding of the coil and closed breaker points to ground. The points are opened and closed by a cam on the rotating shaft.



Typical point type ignition system

Current flowing through the coil's primary winding creates a magnetic field around the winding. When the points open, the primary circuit is interrupted, and the magnetic field collapses. This induces an extremely high voltage in the secondary windings of the coil. This high voltage flows through a high-voltage cable from the top of the coil to the center terminal of the distributor cap, to the rotor, and thence through the terminal in the cap aligned with the rotor at that moment to a spark plug. The plug "fires," and the air-fuel mixture is ignited, forcing the piston down. The crankshaft turns, the camshaft turns, the distributor shaft turns, and the cam closes the points again. The next spark plug to fire will be the one connected to the distributor cap terminal aligned with the rotor in the position it has when the points next open.

PLEASE NOTE. Illustrations accompanying this article not labelled as "Buick Shop Manual" or "Master Parts List" are taken from a general auto reference work ("MOTOR Auto Engines and Electrical Systems" - 8th Edition). These show typical configurations and do not represent exactly any particular car.



Simple, yes? There is one remaining problem. The opening of the points tends to induce voltage in the primary winding, which we do not want, because it will arc current across the points. This arcing will burn the points quickly. To bring the primary circuit current flow to an abrupt stop and minimize the arcing, a condenser is connected across the points. The condenser is a capacitor: a device which can "soak up," store, and release voltage.

The coil is nothing more than a simple transformer: two coils of wire around a soft iron core in a hermetically sealed case. The secondary winding may have 15,000 - 30,000 turns of fine copper wire, insulated from the core and each other by a thin coating of enamel. Outside this, and insulated from it, is the primary winding, far fewer turns of much heavier copper wire.

BUICK SHOP MANUAL, 1937

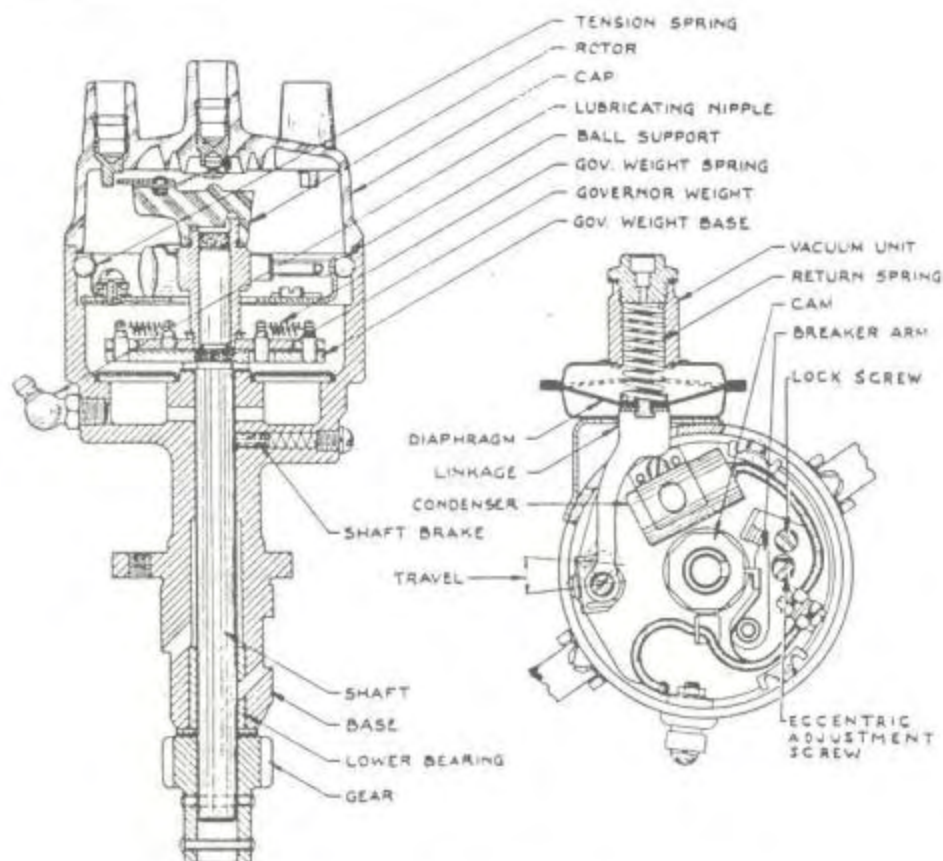
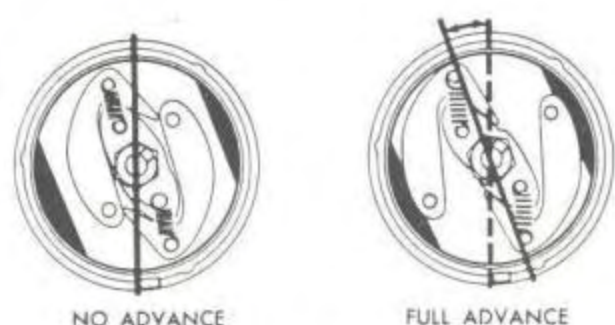


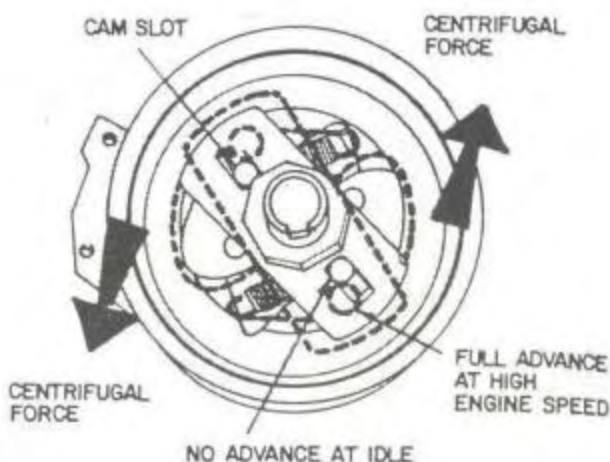
Fig. 12-21. Distributor—All Series

If the engine ran at constant speed under uniform load, this little essay would be over. But, in addition to opening and closing circuits and sending high-voltage surges out to the spark plugs, the distributor must time these surges according to engine requirements. This is done by the centrifugal (mechanical) and vacuum advance mechanisms.

The centrifugal advance mechanism responds to engine speed, advancing and retarding ignition timing by moving weights as they rotate. The base plate (see the diagram) is rigidly attached to the shaft. Two centrifugal weights are pivoted on pins attached to the base plate. The weights are held inward by small coil springs (one of these broke in Paul's story). There is a pin extending up from each weight; these engage slots in a plate welded to the base of the cam. The springs hold the weights close to the center of the distributor when the engine is idling. As engine speed increases and the base plate rotates faster, centrifugal force pulls them outward. This rotates the cam in relation to its former position, advancing the spark. That is to say, the points open a fraction of a second sooner than at idle speed, and the spark plug fires before the piston reaches top dead center (TDC). How much before is, of course, a function of how far the spark is advanced. Why do this? The answer is that at higher RPM the air-fuel mixture needs extra time to start burning if it is to start "pushing" immediately at TDC, because everything is moving so fast. When we talk about timing here, folks, we're talking millionths of a second.



As engine speed increases, the centrifugal advance weights move outward and advance the timing



Engine speed is not the only reason to advance or retard spark. Load on the engine of course varies, and is not a direct function of RPM. During acceleration or under heavy load, the advance necessary to maintain maximum power is less than that required for light loads. In the '37 and '38 Buick, the centrifugal advance mechanism is designed for best full throttle operation. The increased advance for light load is furnished by the vacuum advance mechanism.

The vacuum advance consists of a unit attached to the distributor housing. Inside is a spring-loaded diaphragm connected by an arm to the breaker plate, which is mounted on ball bearings in the distributor. The unit is sealed and connected to the carburetor by a vacuum line. Increasing vacuum pulls the diaphragm back, moving the arm and the breaker plate. The points are attached to the plate, and thus their location in relation to the cam is varied in this way. (Thus, the centrifugal advance varies the orientation of the cam in relation to the points, and the vacuum advance the orientation of the points in relation to the cam.)

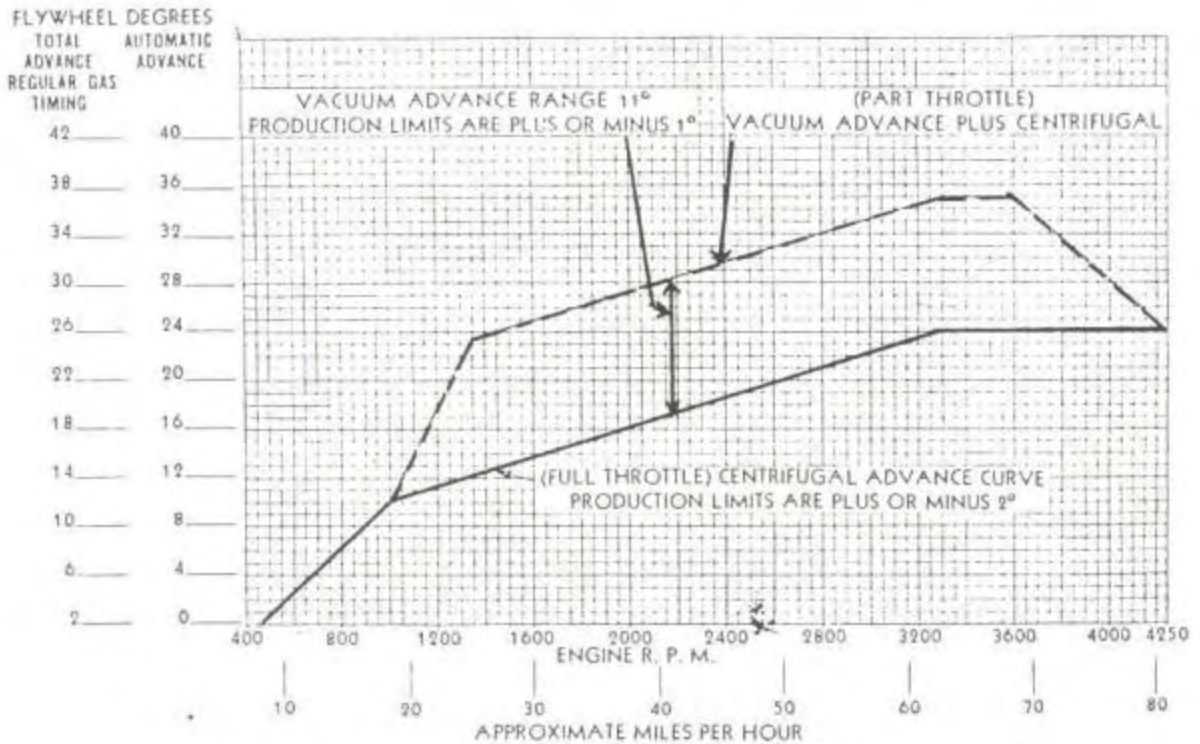
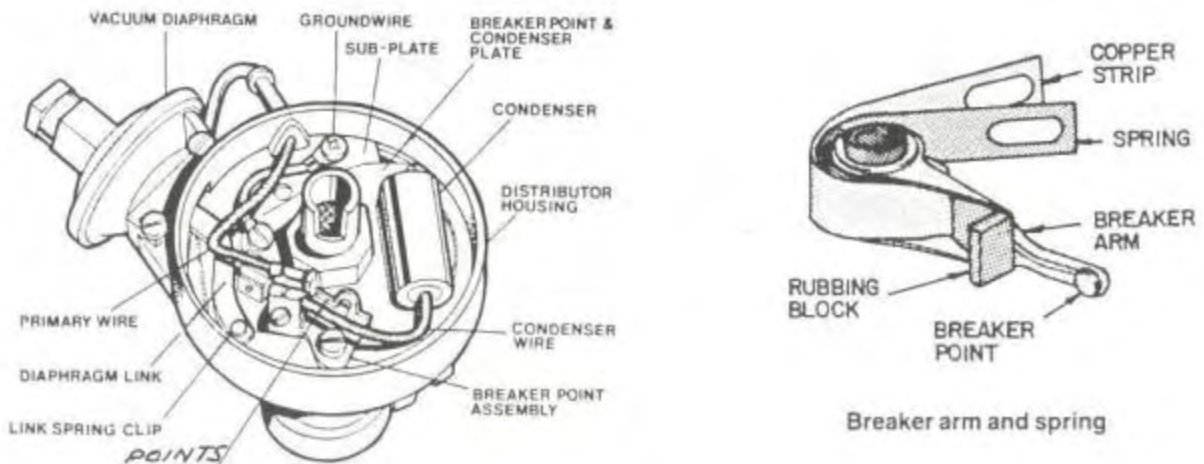


Fig. 12-20. Distributor Spark Advance—Series 40

The advance to obtain smooth idle should be zero. The centrifugal advance thus does not begin to function until RPM exceeds about 500. The vacuum line is connected to the carburetor throat (not the manifold) above the throttle valve ("fly"). Thus when the valve is closed (horizontal) there is little or no vacuum in the line, and it is necessary to open the throttle to the equivalent of 18 MPH to get sufficient vacuum to begin advancing the spark.

Under normal driving (part throttle) both the centrifugal and vacuum advance mechanisms are at work. Under heavy load, intake vacuum decreases: more air is entering the manifold in relation to the falling pistons' ability to pump air out of it. Under this condition, the vacuum advance is not operating and the spring in the unit pulls the breaker plate to the retard position.



Isn't all this simple? Not really; there's a lot I left out, but maybe some of you now understand a little better how distributors work and why. It is the automatic variation of timing that makes for a lot of the complexity. Before the introduction of this, back — way back — in the 20's and before, there was just a lever on the steering column, connected to the breaker plate by linkage, and you did it yourself. Before you crank 'er, push the lever to "Retard;" when you're chuggin' along about 35 on the level, push up to full "Advance;" start goin' up hill and you'd better start back toward "Retard" or you'll hear some awful knockin'. A lot simpler, but the automatic mechanisms do it with much greater precision, for better performance.

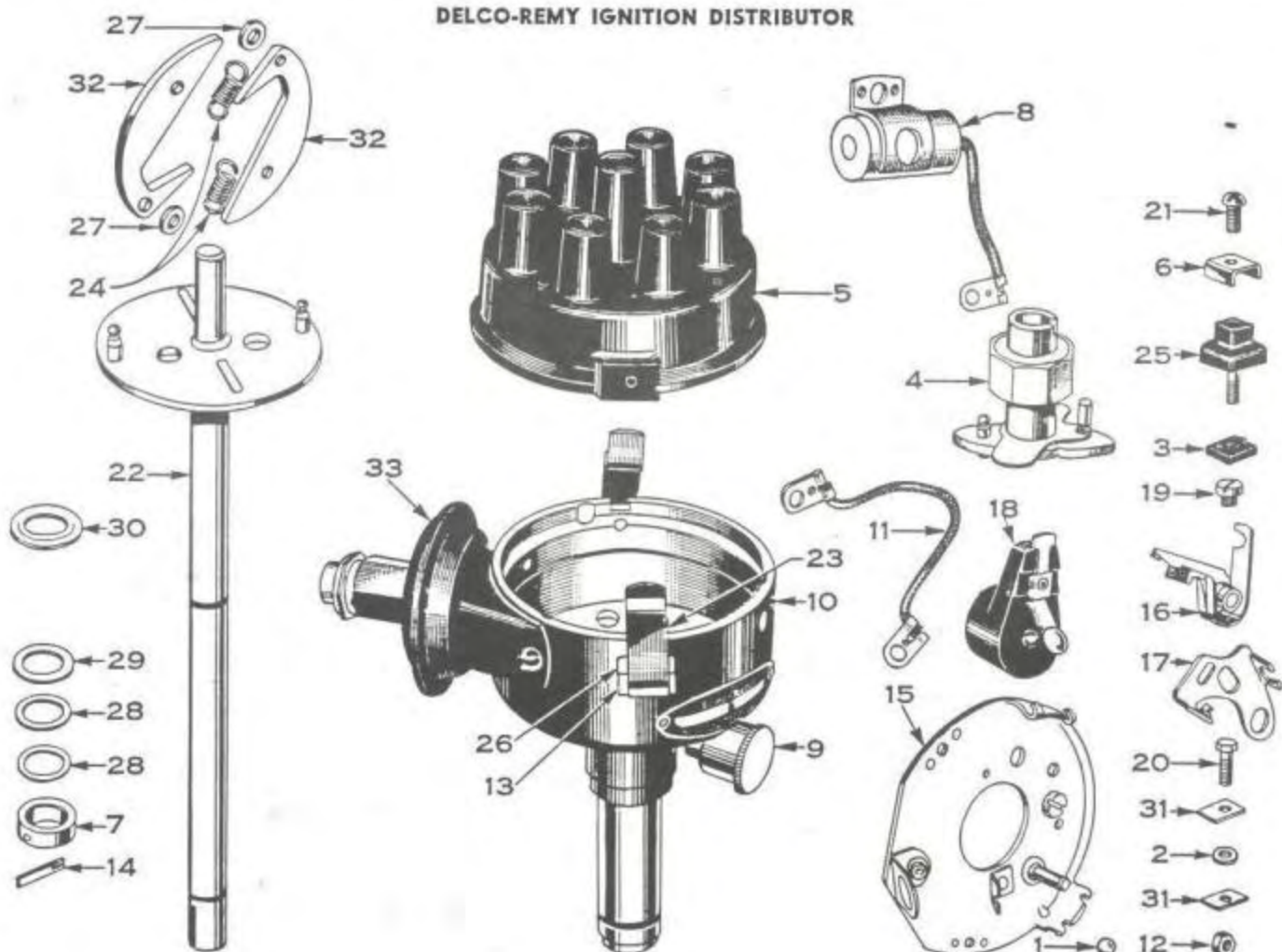
As I said, there's much more to say about ignition and timing, and there are several little pieces in the distributor we haven't talked about at all. We've hardly scratched the surface of repairing all these parts. But it's all I can do for now. Maybe more next time. Can any member contribute to this?



BUICK MASTER PARTS LIST



DELCO-REMY IGNITION DISTRIBUTOR



ILLUS. NO. PART NO. LIST PRICE MODELS AND DESCRIPTION

DISTRIBUTOR, Complete

.....	640-A	8.00	.....	1928 (820873)
.....	640-J	8.00	.....	1929 (825373)
.....	639-Y	8.00	.....	1930-30 (829739)
.....	640-Y	8.00	.....	1930-40 (1835705)
.....	650-B	8.00	.....	1930-50-60 (1835742)
.....	660-E	.....	.....	1931-60-80-90 (1837761) Order 662-B
.....	660-L	10.50	.....	1931-32-50 (1838293)
.....	662-B	10.50	.....	1932-60-80-90 (1842675)
.....	661-L	9.50	.....	1933-50 (1847011)
.....	661-K	9.50	.....	1933-60-80-90 (1847019)
.....	663-E	10.00	.....	1934-35-40; 1936-60-80-90 (1855847)
.....	663-C	10.00	.....	1934-50 (1853767)
.....	663-A	10.00	.....	1934-60-90 (1853155)
.....	663-F	10.00	.....	1936-40 (1860569)
.....	663-Y	10.00	.....	1937-40 (1865759)
.....	663-Z	10.00	.....	1937-60-80-90 (1865761) if Stromberg carb.
.....	663-ZX	10.00	1937-60-80-90 if Marvel carburetor
.....	1110801	10.00	1938

1 BEARING, Breaker plate ball

.....	104918	.01	1934 to 1938
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2 BUSHING, Contact arm insulating

.....	33765	.05	1923 to 1927—Lower
.....	33436	.01	1923 to 1927—Upper
.....	1837832	.05	.....	1930-50-60; 1931-32—Upper and lower ($\frac{1}{16}$ " I.D.)
.....	33436	.01	.....	1930-50-60; 1931-32—Lower ($\frac{1}{16}$ " I.D.)
.....	1865977	.05	.....	1937-38

3 BUSHING, Terminal screw insulating

.....	821033	.05	.....	1930-30
.....	1853286	.05	1937
.....	1865985	.10	1938

BUTTON, Distributor cap carbon

.....	821604	.05	1929 to 1938
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4 CAM

.....	28892	1.00	1921-22 6-Cyl.
.....	15393	1.50	1922 to 1924 4-Cyl.
.....	15624	1.50	1923 6-Cyl.
.....	16077	1.50	1924 to 1927 6-Cyl.
.....	821142	1.00	.....	1928
.....	825464	1.00	.....	1929; 1930-40
.....	1835978	1.00	.....	1930-50-60
.....	820989	1.00	.....	1930-30
.....	1837948	1.00	.....	1931-32
.....	1845953	1.00	.....	1933
.....	1853276	.75	.....	1934 to 1936
.....	1865964	1.00	.....	1937
.....	1868311	1.00	.....	1938

5 CAP, Distributor

.....	14322	2.35	.....	1921-22 6-Cyl.
.....	15449	1.85	.....	1922-23-24 4-Cyl.
.....	15715	2.10	.....	1923-24 6-Cyl.; 1925 to 1927
.....	821138	1.50	.....	1928
.....	824735	.75	.....	1929; 1930-40-50-60
.....	1838100	.65	.....	1930-30
.....	1837494	1.50	1931 to 1938

6 CLIP, Terminal screw channel

.....	26153	.05	All models
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ILLUS. NO. PART NO. LIST PRICE MODELS AND DESCRIPTION

8 CONDENSER

.....	17307	1.50	1921-22
.....	17254	1.00	.....	1922-23-24 4-Cyl.; 1923 6-Cyl.
.....	16063	.50	.....	1924 6-Cyl.; 1926-27
.....	*1869704	.40	.....	1928-29; 1930-40; 1933; 1937-38
.....	*1869706	.40	.....	1930-30-50-60; 1931-32
.....	*1869705	.40	.....	1934-35-40; 1936

GEAR

.....	33416	1.30	.....	1922 to 1925
.....	36140	.95	.....	1926-27
.....	821163	.35	.....	1928-29; 1930-40-50-60
.....	*1837949	.40	.....	1931 to 1933; 1934-35-50-60-90
.....	*1283994	.75	.....	1934-35-40; 1936-37-38

10 HOUSING, Distributor

.....	15505	3.60	.....	1923 to 1925
.....	16631	2.50	.....	1926-27
.....	821136	2.00	.....	1928-29; 1930-40
.....	1835973	2.50	.....	1930-50-60
.....	823879	2.00	.....	1930
.....	1837939	2.50	.....	1931-32
.....	1845950	2.50	.....	1933
.....	1853271	2.50	.....	1934-35-50-60-90
.....	1855986	2.00	.....	1934-35-40; 1936
.....	1865962	2.00	.....	1937-38

INSERT, Distributor cap outlet

.....	33402	.05	.....	1923 to 1933
.....	* 829537	.01	1929 to 1938

11 LEAD, Breaker plate ground

.....	1853288	.10	1934 to 1936
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LEAD, Terminal connector

.....	1836907	.15	1931-32
.....	1853289	.10	1934-35-50-60-90
.....	1856028	.10	1934-35-40; 1936
.....	1865978	.10	.....	1937-38

LOCKWASHER, Condenser attaching screw

.....	106495	.01	.....	1922 to 1927; 1930-30
.....	141551	.01	.....	1928 to 1938

NUT, Contact screw lock

.....	21748	.05	.....	1924 to 1927—Large
.....	26828	.05	1924 to 1927—Small

13 PIN, Distributor cap spring

.....	1836915	.05	1937-38
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14 PIN, Gear

.....	813131	.05	1928
.....	* 815003	.05	1929; 1930-40-50-60; 1931 to 1933; 1934-35-50-60-90
.....	*1857492	.05	.....	1934-35-40; 1936-37-38

15 PLATE, Breaker

.....	16169	.35	.....	1924 to 1927 6-Cyl.
.....	821150	.75	.....	1928-29; 1930-40
.....	820455	.25	.....	1930-50-60—Upper
.....	1835522	.75	.....	1930-50-60—Lower
.....	826474	.25	.....	1930-30
.....	1836904	.35	.....	1931-32—Upper
.....	1838624	.75	.....	1931-32—Lower
.....	1843440	.75	.....	1933
.....	1853281	.35	1934-35-36
.....	1865968	.40	1937-38

ILLUS. NO.	PART NO.	LIST PRICE	MODELS AND DESCRIPTION
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DELCO-REMY IGNITION DISTRIBUTOR—Continued

16-17 POINTS, Contact—Continued

.....*	813238	.40	..... 1930-50-60—Arm (2)
.....*	1845785	.25	..... 1930-50-60—Support (Lower)
.....*	1849877	.25	..... 1930-50-60—Support (Upper)
.....*	1857958	1.30	..... 1931-32—Point set
.....	813238	.40	..... 1931-32—Arm (2)
.....	1845785	.25	..... 1931-32—Support (Lower)
.....	1849876	.25	..... 1931-32—Support (Upper)
.....*	1871869		..... 1933 to 1936—Point set
.....	1842058	.45	..... 1933 to 1936—Arm
.....	1845785	.25	..... 1933 to 1936—Support
.....*	1871870	.75	..... 1937-38—Point set
.....	1842058	.50	..... 1937-38—Arm
.....	1865975	.30	..... 1937-38—Support

18 ROTOR

.....	12167	1.25	..... 1921-22
.....	15325	.50	..... 1922-27
.....	820445	.20	..... 1928-29; 1930-40-50-60
.....	816774	.20	..... 1930-30
.....*	1836893	.30	..... 1931 to 1938

SCREW, Breaker plate ground lead

.....	115434	.01	..... 1934 to 1936
.....	817363	.05	..... 1934 to 1937

SCREW, Condenser attaching

.....	802847	.05	..... 1922 to 1927
.....	131951	.01	..... 1928-29; 1930-40; 1933
.....	114935	.01	..... 1930-50-60; 1931-32; 1934 to 1937
.....	115417	.01 1930-30

19 SCREW, Breaker plate attaching

.....	816784	.05 1928 to 1938
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20 SCREW, Contact arm tension spring and condenser lead attaching

.....	813511	.01 1928 to 1936
.....	1858576	.05	..... 1937-38

SCREW, Distributor shaft felt plug and spring retaining

.....	142424	.01	..... 1928 to 1933
.....	109439	.05	..... 1934 to 1938

21 SCREW, Terminal

.....	107714	.01	..... 1928-29; 1930-40-50-60
.....	141551	.01	..... Lockwasher
.....	820987	.05	..... 1930-30
.....	107710	.01	..... 1937-38
.....	121841	.01 1937-38—Lockwasher

SCREW, Timing adjusting and gear retaining

.....	15464	.15 1922 to 1927
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22 SHAFT AND PLATE

.....	16628	3.00 1926-27—With advance plate & weights
.....	821145	1.50 1928
.....	825513	1.50	..... 1929
.....	829617	1.50	..... 1930-30
.....	1835631	1.50	..... 1930-40
.....	1835975	1.50	..... 1930-50-60
.....	1837941	1.50	..... 1931-60-80-90
.....	1839350	1.50 1931-32-50

ILLUS. NO.	PART NO.	LIST PRICE	MODELS AND DESCRIPTION
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.....	1843046	1.25 1932-60-80-90
.....	1845954	1.25 1933-50
.....	1845947	1.25 1933-60-80-90
.....	1856027	1.00 1934-35-40; 1936-60-80-90
.....	1860927	1.00	..... 1936-37-40
.....	1865952	1.00	..... 1937-60-80-90 if 663-Z distributor
.....	1871543		..... 1937-60-80-90 if 663-ZX distributor
.....	1868626	1.00	..... 1938

23 SPRING, Distributor cap retaining

.....	30111	.10	..... 1921-22
.....	33599	.10	..... 1922 to 1927
.....	834069	.05	..... 1928-29; 1930-40-50-60
.....	816801	.05	..... 1930-30
.....	1836913	.05	..... 1931 to 1938

24 SPRING, Automatic advance weight

.....	34280	.10	..... 1926-27—1 used
.....	36348	.05	..... 1926-27—2 used
.....	821162	.05	..... 1928—1 used
.....	820438	.05	..... 1928—1 used
.....	819194	.10	..... 1929; 1930-40; 1931 to 1935; 1936-60—2 used
.....	821648	.05	..... 1930-30—2 used
.....	823238	.10	..... 1930-50-60
.....	1835699	.05	..... 1930-50-60
.....	825515	.05	..... 1936-40; 1937-38

25 STUD, Terminal and bushing

.....*	1836911	.20	..... 1931-32-33
.....*	1853625	.15 1934 to 1938

26 SUPPORT, Distributor cap spring

.....	1853292	.05 1937-38
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27 WASHER, Automatic advance weight

.....	811124	.01 1928 to 1938
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WASHER, Breaker plate ground spring

.....	1865983	.05 1937-38
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28 WASHER, Shim

.....	810074	.02 1928 to 1933; 1934-35-50-60-90 .005"
.....	810078	.02 1928 to 1933; 1934-35-50-60-90 .040"
.....	1848595	.05	..... 1934-35-40; 1936-37-38—.005" thick
.....	1848596	.05	..... 1934-35-40; 1936-37-38—.010" thick

29 WASHER, Gear thrust

.....	810085	.05	..... 1928-29-30
.....	811912	.05	..... 1931-32
.....	1849806	.05	..... 1933; 1934-35-50-60-90
.....*	1266718	.15	..... 1934-35-40; 1936-37-38

30 WASHER, Shaft weight plate

.....	811912	.05	..... 1928; 1931 to 1933
.....	810085	.05	..... 1929-30
.....	1849806	.05	..... 1934 to 1938

31 WASHER, Terminal stud insulating

.....	1853286	.05	..... 1934-35-36-37—Inside
.....	20076	.05 1923 to 1927—Outside

32 WEIGHT, Automatic advance

.....	13408	.75 1921-22
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ILLUS. NO.	PART NO.	LIST PRICE	MODELS AND DESCRIPTION
.....	818222	.20	1928
.....	825469	.15	1929: 1930-40-50-60
.....	821596	.10	1930-30
.....	1837944	.20	1931 to 1938
WICK, Cam felt			
.....	821164	.05	1928-29: 1930-40-50-60
.....	816803	.05	1930-30
.....	819639	.05	1931 to 1938
WRENCH			
.....	12741	.15	
.....	814664	.10	
DELCO-REMY DISTRIBUTOR VACUUM CONTROL			
33 VACUUM CONTROL, Complete			
.....	680-R	1.25	1934-35-40: 1936
.....	680-H	1.25	1934-35-50-60-90
.....	681-H	1.25	1937-38
BRACKET, Vacuum control			
.....	1853362	.20	1934-35-36
.....	1865984	.05	1937-38
COUPLING			
.....	1854956	.25	1934-35-40: 1936
.....	1841900	.25	1934-35-50-60-90
.....	1865961	.25	1937-38
GASKET, Coupling			
.....	1841901	.05	1934 to 1938
NUT, Vacuum control mounting			
.....	115295	.02	1934-35-36
.....	141552	.01	Lockwasher
SPRING, Diaphragm			
.....	1853691	.10	1934-35-36
.....	1865960	.10	1937-38



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201/890-9682

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1937 Intermediate steering arm pivot kit (Series 40/60)	\$ 25.00	

Parting out a 1938 Buick Series 61 and 68, all parts are used.

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Head Lights (Lense,Cone,Guts,Reflector,Etc...)	\$150.00	pr
Front Bumper Badge (Buick 8 Bumper Badge)	\$100.00	
Front Bumper (Special / Century)	\$ 75.00	
Bumper Guards	\$ 25.00	ea
Rechromed Bumper Guards	\$ 40.00	ea
Rear Bumper (Special / Century)	\$ 35.00	
Rear Bumper Gravel Guard (Special / Century)	\$ 25.00	
Engine Gravel Guard (Century) (Sandblasted)	\$ 50.00	pr
Front Door Wing Vents (Special / Century)	\$ 50.00	pr
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Rear Floor Foot Rest (Limited)	\$ 10.00	
Rear Arm Rest Ash Trays (Limited)	\$ 10.00	pr
Rear Arm Rest Ash Trays (Century)	\$ 10.00	pr
Front End Parts (Axles,A-Frames,Etc...) (Century)	Make Offer	
Rear End (Torque Tub,Rear End Guts,Axles,Etc...) (Century)	\$250.00	set
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Front Sway Bar (Special / Century)	\$ 15.00	
Starter (Special)	\$ 20.00	
Rear License Plate Bracket	\$ 10.00	
Marvel Carb. (Special)	\$ 20.00	
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Front Seat (Coupe)	\$ 25.00	
Rear Seat (Special)	\$ 20.00	
Rear Seat With Arm Rest (Century)	\$ 25.00	

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Pistons	\$ 10.00	ea
Pistons Connecting Rods	\$ 10.00	ea
Lifters	\$ 2.50	ea
Camshaft	\$ 35.00	
Rocker Arms & Shaft	\$ 45.00	set
Crankshaft	\$ 45.00	
Main Bearing Caps	\$ 15.00	set
Oil Pan	\$ 20.00	
Cylinder Head	\$ 55.00	
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Flywheel	\$ 25.00	
Distributor	\$ 20.00	
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Anytime Saturday and Sunday.

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PARTS WANTED

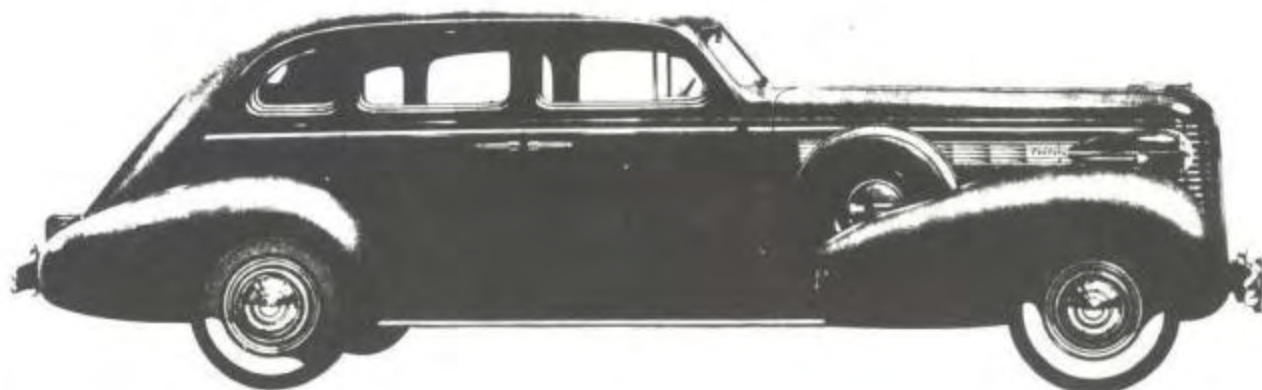


WANTED: For 1937 Century. Stromberg AA-2 carb (large series); head light left side interior bucket & reflector; cowl vent handle with plastic knob.

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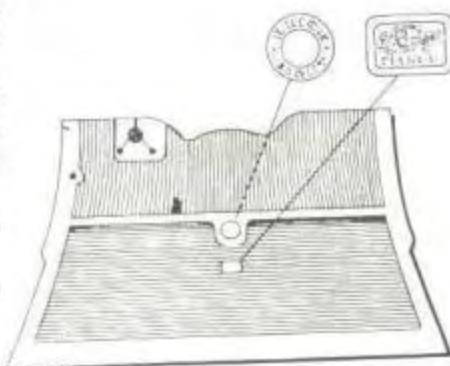
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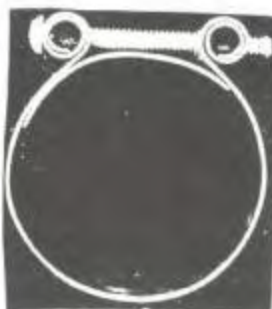
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